[2 cont.]

133 The greater part of the coast of La Guajira, which measures in all some 350 kilometers, belongs to Colombia. It starts from the Río Hacha in the west and extends to Lake Maracaibo in the east. It may be divided into two general parts, one low and liable to flooding, the other highland rising sheer from the coast. The low part starts from Pajaina Channel, which flows into Lake Maracaibo in front of San Carlos Island and continues approximately to the port of Cojoro. From there onward the land rises from the sea in the form of cliffs roughly to the level of Castilletes, a point where the coast level descends slightly to rise again near Punta Espada due to the eastern spurs from the Sierra de Macuira, which, as we have noted in previous paragraphs, then lose themselves in the sea. From this point, going always toward the west, the coast is rocky and inaccessible because of its continental structure.

[135 317] In the far western part of the La Guajira coast we find the most important saltworks that are being exploited in the country, such as those of Pájaro, Manaure, and Bahía Honda which supply salt to the major part of the coastal departments and even to those in the interior of the republic. The coast of this part has numerous beautiful and deep bays among which Bahía Honda is outstanding. [136] Along the coast rich fishing grounds are found, such as Bahía Honda, Cabo de la Vela, Cardón, and Carrizal, centers of fishing and pearl exploitation. Unfortunately, it has not been found practicable to make use of all the commercial navigation [312] and fishing possibilities of this coast due to the absence of potable water in the vicinity. This we were well able to appreciate when we found that the water required for drinking in Carrizal and San José de Bahía Honda, during our stay in these regions, was transported distances greater than ten kilometers.

361 504 The most important ports of the coast of La Guajira, from west to east, are Ahuyama; Manaure, center of the salt industry; Cardón and Carrizal, pearl fishing centers; San José de Bahía Honda, on the bay of the same name, also engaged in the salt industry, and Puerto Estrella, center of the maritime traffic of motorized sailing boats plying between the islands of Aruba and Curaçao, and Puerto López.

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
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bed of a watercourse. As the season advances, and the water recedes, they either dig after it or search for a lower level. Wells of 30 to 40 feet are very common. The water is reached by a staircase cut in the sand with an easy incline. Wells are easily distinguishable from a distance by the water-troughs, hollowed out of divi-divi trees, and called canoes. These are of the most distorted and grotesque shapes, and serve to water the herd. This is very hard work for the poor Indians during the summer months, and usually employs the whole day. Water from wells if taken early in the morning is always clear and cool. When bathing at a well the Indian uses a canoe; if he stops to drink, a bath invariably follows. Every well has a name, and the country is perforated by them like a mining camp. The wells of Chimaro are phenomenal; dug out on the sea-shore, on a narrow strip of sand 100 yards in breadth, with the sea on one side and the salt-pans of Chimaro, with layers of salt many feet thick, on the other, the water is, notwithstanding, perfectly fresh. There are seven holes about 10 feet deep. I may mention that Parashi is the name of a celebrated well dug in the river that drains the eastern flank of Ruma. It means "salt," probably because the water is brackish.

Second in importance are the water-tanks or *casimbas*. These are sometimes natural, as a small lake at the foot of Ruma and the casimbas of Cojua, filtrations from the river Naima, forming a large lake in the rainy season and many small dirty pools in summer, but nature aided by art is the rule. Some are immense undertakings, and large sheets of water, calculated to last a summer through if not too severe; such as Ariapi, the casimba of Puerto Estrella, a large crescent-shaped piece of water of about a quarter of a square mile. The water of these casimbas is always muddy and filthy for drinking purposes. The herds are driven in, and every Indian that passes is sure to bathe, so that in time almost a skin of grease forms on the top; and yet in places where they are it is the only water to be had, truly meat and drink combined.

The Goajira coast abounds in harbours and bays, but none of much importance. Between Rio Hacha and Cabo de la Vela, in the extensive bay formed by the latter, anchorage is found almost all along the coast. Numerous roadsteads have become known through the commerce with the Indians, and quite a large trade is carried on in the small coasting schooners. Further along the coast are three large bays. The first, or Portete, is a large bay, well protected from the easterly trades, and is certainly the best port along the coast. Unfortunately the entrance is narrow, intricate, and with shoals. The next, Bahia Honda, is almost a complete oval, some eight miles long by three miles broad, and with an entrance of nearly three miles broad. It is separated from the sea by a stone wall from 60 to 80 feet at the highest, but not enough to protect the bay from the strong easterly winds that blow with such force here. It makes but a poor harbour, the surf inside during the afternoons pre-

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
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venting anything being landed dry. The Colombian Government erected a guard-house at the entrance of this bay last year, but I am afraid it will have to be abandoned as untenable. Puerto Estrella makes a very bad port, the small trading schooners having to lie in under the breakers. This is the last recognised Colombian port, at least pending the arbitration question. The next good port is the Laguna de Tucacas, in the Gulf of Maracaybo. This place is much frequented by Venezuelans, and a trade has sprung up that if not checked will ruin the already drooping commerce of Rio Hacha. The last port on the coast is that of Cojoro, and spoken of as the future port of Maracaybo, with which it would have to be connected by rail, an engineering feat of not much difficulty. The *ensenada* or bay of Calabozo has an inaccessible, heavy, surf-beaten coast.

The peninsula is inhabited by only one tribe of Indians. These are subdivided into many families or castes, bearing much analogy to the ancient "clans" of Scotland. Each caste or rather family circle is united against all comers, taking up the quarrel of any one of its members to make it general. The Goajiros are strictly conservative and aristocratic in their ideas, wealth and interest are omnipotent. A poor man may be insulted with impunity, when the same to a rich man would cause certain bloodshed. They have no veritable rulers, but each community recognises the wealthiest of its members as the chief or corporal, as he has been dubbed by the Spaniards, and look to him for protection. An Indian born poor, cannot become wealthy and great. Whatever herds he may accumulate, his humble origin would never be forgotten; he could, however, marry into a high caste family, having the means, and his children could become, through their mother's relations, great chiefs. Besides the name, each caste or family represents some animal, and many of the minor castes, over and above their own symbol, adopt another of some more powerful denomination, to enjoy the privilege of a good protector. There are at present, altogether, some thirty odd castes among the Goajiros. Of these I was able to discover the names of twenty-two. The remainder are insignificant, little known castes, chiefly inhabiting the hills. There are about ten of importance, chief among these the "Urianas." This, the largest caste in the Goajiro, has subdivided or split up into many ramifications, such as Uriana tiger, Uriana rabbit, Uriana paularate (a song bird), Uriana gecko (lizard). This family is at present not only by far the most numerous, but also the richest; due to its connections by marriage with the Pushainas, formerly the wealthiest of the land. The Pushainas are to-day still great holders of tumas and ornaments, but with the Indian, only cattle, mules, and horses are real estate. The Urianas on receiving the tumas, sold out for cattle. The second in numbers are the Epieynes, as a rule they are poor. Under their protection are the Seonanas, again under these the small caste of the Guorgnoriynes. A full list will be given